

SCHOOL SPORT AUSTRALIA

Boys and Girls 12 Years & Under Softball Championships

RULES AND GUIDELINES

Section A – Championship Overview

- A - 1.** These Rules and Guidelines should be read in conjunction with School Sport Australia Policies, Championship Protocols and the Softball Championship Organisational Manual.
- A - 2.** The Championships shall be conducted in accordance with the official rules of the International Softball Federation (ISF) as adopted by Softball Australia Ltd (SAL) unless otherwise stated.
- A - 3.** The Championships shall be conducted in accordance with a current Memorandum of Understanding between School Sport Australia and Softball Australia.

A - 4. Championship Length

The length of the Championship is not to exceed the maximum duration specified in the School Sport Australia Championship Protocols document.

A - 5. Eligibility

All players must be 12 years of age and under on 31 December of the year of competition unless age dispensation has been granted as per rule A - 7.

Added December 2020

A - 6. Team Size

Each State / Territory team roster shall consist of a maximum of fifteen (15) players and a minimum of twelve (12) players.

A - 7. Age Dispensation

Age Dispensation may be granted to a State or Territory for these Championships as allowed through the School Sport Australia Sport Participation Policy.

A - 8. Attendance at Championships

All students who participate in the School Sport Australia Softball Championships must remain at the Championship location throughout the duration of the Championships and be bound by all Championship arrangements, except in exceptional circumstances as per School Sport Australia policy.

Added December 2020

Section B – Competition Structure

B - 1. Program / Schedule

- B - 1.1** Where possible, a minimum of two (2) hours should be allowed between the starting times of games. Should a game extend beyond one and a half (1½) hours, a minimum of half (½) an hour should be allowed between games if one of the teams is involved in a double-header.
- B - 1.2** A minimum of 45 minutes will be scheduled for team warm-ups following the Opening Ceremony.

Added February 2015

B - 1.3 Wet Weather

- B - 1.3.1** If a full day's play is abandoned, games shall be rescheduled on the next available playing day.
- B - 1.3.2** Games forced to stop during the day will be rescheduled later that day where possible, or on the next available playing day.
- B - 1.3.3** Any game stopped while in progress will be continued as soon as possible. The game will recommence from the point where the game was suspended.

For all interrupted games, the recommencement of play will be from the point of interruption unless determined otherwise by the Championship Committee.

Note: A regulation game will be declared if one hour, or three or more completed innings have been played or if the team second at has scored more runs than the other team has scored in three or more innings. If this is the case the game will not be recommenced.

B - 1.3.4 Cancellation of Games

If cancelled, games cannot be rescheduled within the competition. The competition may be reduced to a single round, or a double round if completed. The most recent game/s played between the two teams shall be the game/s to be counted in considering completed rounds.

- B - 1.3.5** Should a game be called due to inclement weather or undue circumstances, a regulation game will be declared if one hour, or three or more completed innings have been played, or if the team second at bat has scored more runs than the other team has scored in three or more innings.

B - 2. Draw

- B - 2.1** For a seven (7) team competition, the round robin will be followed by a further round of two (2) pools (Pool A – top 3 and Pool B – bottom 4) involving two (2) games per team.
- B - 2.2** A double round robin shall be played for a six (6) team format.
- B - 2.3** For a four (4) team competition, three (3) rounds of competition to be played.
- B - 2.4** Where necessary, three (3) games may be played in any one day.

B - 3. Duration of matches

- B - 3.1** All games during the Championship will consist of seven (7) innings or one hour and twenty minutes, whichever comes first.
- B - 3.2** A game that is tied at the end of the seven (7) innings or at the end of a completed innings after one hour and twenty minutes shall be considered a drawn game.
- B - 3.3** At the expiration of one hour and twenty minutes, the batter in the batting box will complete that turn at bat.
- B - 3.4** At the expiration of one hour and twenty minutes, if the team first at bat leads or the scores are tied, the score will revert to the score at the end of the last even innings. If the team second at bat leads, the score will stand.
- B - 3.5** No new innings will be commenced in the last five (5) minutes of a game.
- B - 3.6** The plate umpire shall be responsible for the keeping of time and shall record the starting time with the official scorer/s if used OR otherwise with both team scorers.

B - 4. Game Protocols / Specific Rules / Results B

- 4.1** Pitching distance shall be
 - B - 4.1.1** Girls – 11.58 metres
 - B - 4.1.2** Boys – 12.19 metres
- B - 4.2** A base line distance of 18.29 metres for both Boys and Girls divisions.
- B - 4.3** Limited pitching will apply in that, in any one game, any one pitcher shall pitch not more than three (3) innings, except where the game goes to seven (7) innings whereby a fourth (4th) innings may be pitched. One pitch constitutes an innings.

Amended February 2024

B - 4.4 Catcher Speed Up Rule

- B - 4.4.1** If the catcher is on base or is awarded a base when there are two out, the catcher may be replaced on the base by any player, from the team line up, other than any of the next four batters.
- B - 4.4.2** If the catcher is not replaced, another player in full protective gear should be ready to warm up the pitcher at the beginning of the next innings.

Amended February 2016

B - 4.5 Official Rule 4 The Game, Sec 3 Players to be modified to allow the inclusion of a `Designated Runner`.

- B - 4.5.1** A `DESIGNATED RUNNER`, referred to as a `DR`, may be used provided the position of DR is listed on the line-up sheet, in the allocated position, prior to the start of the game and the player's name is indicated.
- B - 4.5.2** The `DR` position may be used in offense only
- B - 4.5.3** The `DR` may be used for any base runner, including as the runner in the application of the Catcher Speed Up rule, once only in any offensive inning.
- B - 4.5.4** The `DR` may be used as a substitute for any fielder or batter during the game, at which time the `DR` may be substituted for by a player who then becomes the `DR`. The substitute must be a player who has not been in the game.
- B - 4.5.5** If the `DR` is not substituted for in the same change the position of `DR` shall lapse
- B - 4.5.6** A `DR` substituted for may not return to this position within the game.
- B - 4.5.7** The consequence of a breach of this rule will be treated in the same manner

B - 4.6 Official Rule 5, The Game, Sec 1 Choice of Turn at Bat to be modified:**Home Team**

The first named team shall occupy first base and will toss a coin prior to the commencement of each game, to determine which team will bat first (at the discretion of the winner of the toss).

B - 4.7 Declaration

- B - 4.7.1** In all games the batting team may declare their innings closed. This declaration may be made for each innings if so desired.

In round robin competition, an innings is complete when either three outs have been made, 5 runs have crossed the plate or the offensive teams declares their batting inning closed.

Note: This rule does not apply for the final series (Semi-Finals, Preliminary Finals, Grand Finals or any other games determined to be part of the final series)

Note: On an automatic home run, all runs will be scored and counted in the total runs for that inning.

Amended February 2024

B - 4.8 Loss of Time

In the event of a protest, diamond maintenance, interruption to play or an injury to a player lasting more than 5 minutes, the umpire will note the time taken. This time will be added to the finishing time for the game to ensure the full time allocation for the game.

B - 4.9 **Rule 6 Sect. 8 Intentional Walk** as detailed in the ISF Rulebook will not apply in this competition.

Amended March 2017

B - 4.10 Where a fenced diamond is available for the championships, the outfield fence distance will be as exists on each fenced diamond. For all other diamonds a boundary distance, of 175ft minimum and 200ft maximum, will

be marked with a line and cones. A fair batted ball which clears this marked distance will be awarded a home run. A fair batted ball which passes through this marked distance after having first contacting the ground will be awarded three bases from the time of the pitch.

B - 4.11 The ISF Run Ahead Rule will apply for the SSA 12 Years and Under Championship and games shall be declared appropriately. However, if time permits, the game may continue if both teams are in agreement, but no further runs will score.

Amended March 2017

B - 5. Points Allocation

The point scoring system shall be:

Win -3 points

Draw -2 points Loss

-1 point

Section C – Facilities / Equipment

C - 1. A Softball Australia approved 11 inch (Hard Core) softball shall be used.

- C - 2.** All bases and pitching plates, where possible, should be pegged. If this is not possible, the base position must be clearly marked.

Section D – Uniform

- D - 1.** During the Softball Championship matches, players must wear the designated State / Territory uniform.

Section E – Injury Management

E - 1. Player Safety

It is highly recommended that shin guards, mouth guards and protectors be worn by all players.

E - 2. Pitcher Warm Up

- E - 2.1** Players and team officials warming up pitchers at any time must wear full protective gear.
- E - 2.2** All warm-ups for pitchers during games must be conducted in foul territory in the outfield of the diamond except on diamonds where a designated warm-up area is provided.
- E - 2.3** The catcher must be facing towards home plate and a spotter wearing a helmet must be positioned behind the pitcher and facing the game in order to alert the catcher and pitcher of any balls which may be hit towards them.

Refer to School Sport Australia Championship Protocols and Policy for the management of injuries. This policy will override any sport specific injury management Protocols.

[School-Sport-Australia-Injury-Management-Policy.pdf \(schoolsportaustralia.edu.au\)](https://schoolsportaustralia.edu.au/School-Sport-Australia-Injury-Management-Policy.pdf)

New Policy Dec 2023

Section F – Officials

- F - 1.** A Championship Chief Umpire is to be appointed by the host member body.

- F - 2.** All games should have qualified Plate and Base Umpires where possible.

- F - 3.** Each competing state/territory should bring a qualified student umpire.

F - 4. Scorers

- F - 4.1** Each team is to be responsible for the provision of a scorer for each game and Scoresheets.

- F - 4.2** Each team is to be responsible to complete a team scorecard at the beginning of each game. Scorers are to ensure that correct names are entered along with

any positional changes that have occurred during the game along with scores by innings.

- F - 4.3** Similarly, the need for accuracy in recording scores is stressed. Copies of scorecards are to be given to the Championship Manager at the conclusion of each match.

Amended March 2017

Section G – Protests

- G - 1.** Protests against a playing rule interpretation must be lodged immediately before the next pitch to the plate umpire or with the most Senior Umpire not officiating in that game. The time of the game shall be suspended at the time the protest is lodged.

Depending on the time elapsed, any warm-up time is to be granted at the Umpire's discretion. The time of the game resumes at the next pitch.

- G - 2.** Refer to School Sport Australia General Policy for the management of protests.

Section H – Tribunal / Judiciary

- H - 1.** The Championship Committee will adjudicate on Disputes and Disciplinary matters. The Committee will consist of the National Sport Advisor, Championship Chief Umpire and the Championship Convener.

Section I – Trophies / Awards / Medals

- I - 1.** Exchange of State Badges / Friendship Pins

Amended March 2017

Badges shall be presented at the end of the first game against each team.

- I - 2.** Major Trophies

I - 2.1 The winning girls' team will be presented with the 'T.I. Thompson' trophy.

I - 2.2 The winning boys' team will be presented with the 'Neville Wagner' shield